(d) All aircrafts in NACIL, into which Air India and Indian Airliens have merged, are maintained as per approved schedule/programme. Further, regulatory agencies such as DGCA, EASA, IOSA, ICAO etc. carry out safety audits from time to time.

High level of fluoride and arsenic in ground water

*579. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a recent study by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) had indicated that the ground water in over 200 districts of the country has a high level of flouride and arsenic, posing a big public-health hazard;

(b) whether it is also a fact that among 184 districts across 19 States, Rajasthan is the worst placed with all its 32 districts at risk, while Orissa and Gujarat have 18 districts in the danger list, as revealed in the CGWB website; and

(c) if so, the steps Government has taken to address the problem?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) to (c) The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) periodically monitors ground water quality at regional level. The analysis of samples has indicated high concentration of Fluoride and Arsenic in isolated pockets of 221 districts and 30 districts respectively, in various States. The permissible limit for Fluoride and Arsenic content in drinking water is 1.5 milligram per litre and 0.01 milligram per litre respectively.

In the State of Rajasthan, sporadic occurrence of Fluoride has been reported from all the 33 districts. Isolated pockets of 24 districts in Gujarat and 18 districts in Orissa are also affected with Fluoride contamination.

The steps taken to address the above problems include the following:

(i) Exploration is conducted by CGWB to find out ground water sources free from Arsenic/Fluoride contaminants.

(ii) Technical guidance is provided to the State agencies in tackling the problem of water quality and to take initiatives for capacity building of personnel of State Drinking Water Supply agencies.

(iii) Financial and technical assistance is provided to States under Centrally Sponsored Scheme, namely Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) for provision of safe drinking water to the rural population as per the stipulated norms.

(iv) Financial assistance is provided to States under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT).

Cost overrun of pending projects

*580. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) how many projects, including the joint ventures of the Ministry, its PSUs and subordinate offices costing over rupees 20 crore or more are running behind schedule;